4: Cross L-5 (no date) 1948 E16 Slavs E16

entrances in the old imperial days. Linguistic minorities which never even had alphabets, let alone schools, now have both. Their cultural representatives are hailed as contributors to the intellectual life of the nation, which has a chance of not remaining purely Slavic or European, but may instead draw new life and inspiration from the resident Asiatic and other alien stocks. The intermediate and elementary school system has been extended into the most remote districts, and in non-Slavic areas the native tongue has an equal chance with the official Russian.

The pressure of doctrine which long lay heavy on literature and art, however, has been intensified in recent years. The trend of the times is naturally in favor of a somewhat romantic and dogmatic picture of reality, since it would not be in the interest of the prevailing system to admit that its present imperfections are permanent departures from the ideal which has been set up. Present-day Soviet culture is intensely patriotic, not to say nationalistic. But of the great legacy of the nineteenth century surprisingly little has been lost. The classics are the models for present-day writers. But upon the accomplishment of the past have been grafted the materialistic aims of a new society which aims at a degree of organization and technical achievement which even the great progressives of the sixties would not have deemed possible. For though the autocracy of the Soviet State echoes more than once the spirit of the Muscovite Middle Ages and sometimes applies the methods of the Tartars for its self-preservation, the fact still remains that this autocracy is inwardly devoted to a program of national service, the execution of which we may only hope will not be too seriously hampered or interrupted by international factors and power politics which divert national energy and resources from domestic growth and construction to baser military ends.